Financial Irregularities in the New York Office of STC

*430 SHRI GOPALSINH, G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleaed to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been misappropriation of Government funds and financial irregularities in the New York office of the STC;

(b) whether both the CBI and Government audit party have given adverse remarks in this matter;

(c) if so, whether any official posted at New York was abruptly transferred back to India;

(d) whether Government have held further inquiry into these matters; and

(e) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (e) The Government Audit party in its inspection report on the New York Office of STC for the period April, 1987 to March, 1991 had raised issues regarding wasteful expenditure in hiring of office accommodation, arrears in recovery of rent from the sub-tenant, failure to realise interest on the security deposited with the landlord, etc. comments on these issues have since been furnished by STC to the Audit Party. However, no remarks have been received by STC in this matter from CBI.

A vigilance inquiry was also taken up by STC into the alleged leasing of STC's office space to a private party in violation of the rules. Preliminary report has been submitted by STC to the Government on this matter on which further information has been sought.

The Marketing Manager who was posted to New York office of STC in January, 1991 was recaled by the management of STC in December, 1991 as his performance was not found to be satisfactory.

Export of Grapes

*432. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that export of grapes have increased in terms of quantity by over twelve times since 1993, but the net price fetched per kilogram has dwindled enormously;

(b) if so, the quantum and cost of grapes exported, year-wise from 1993 to 1996;

(c) the main reasons for loss in export earnings; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to help the grape exporters to sustain the trade?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINSITRY OF COMEMRCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c) The quantity and value of grapes exported during 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96 and the average value realisation are as follows: